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Group Backs FDR Shrine

Congress OK Asked On Disputed Design

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Staff Writer

Construction of the controversial Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial was recommended to Congress today.

Reporting for the F. D. R. Memorial commission today, chairman Francis Biddle urged Congress to approve the design for eight times the cost of the site. The commission is to raise construction funds by public subscription.

Next step will be for Biddle to approve the design. If it is approved ahead, it may provide working funds so the commission can carry on a fund-raising campaign.

Cost of the memorial, designed to be placed on a 2½-acre site in West Potomac Park, is estimated at \$4,500,000.

The commission is confident the funds can be raised. Strong support from labor organizations has been indicated.

Height Is 168 Feet

Besides the soaring vertical elements, the highest of which would reach 168 feet, the memorial would include a sculptured bas-relief of President Roosevelt.

Concrete for the memorial would be made of white quartz aggregate, white cement and white sand, and would have a density greater than marble or limestone.

There would be joints to stain, or have repointed from time to time, as would be required in case stone were used. Mr. Biddle reported to Congress.

The strategically placed Fine Arts Commission, which has taken a stand in opposition to the memorial's construction, acknowledged it has qualified

Tilney, a well-known New York architectural firm, was the winning designer.

Mr. Biddle referred to the high standing of the firm that made the award and that he said:

"I can hardly think that the action of the Commission of Fine Arts is calculated to encourage the Government hereafter to rely on the best architects they can obtain to plan and build public buildings."

In announcing its disapproval, the Fine Arts Commission said it had no objections to the design itself, but said it did not comply with requirements of the law that it be "harmonious as to location, design and land use, with the Washington Monument, Jefferson Memorial and the Lincoln Memorial."

Members of the F. D. R. memorial commission, besides Mr. Biddle, are:

Clifford, James H. Rowe, Jr.; Anna Rosenberg, Representative Keogh, Democrat of New York; Representative Schenck, Republican of Ohio; Representative St. George, Republican of New York (a cousin of the late President); Representative Roosevelt, Democrat of California; Senator Humphrey, Democrat of Minnesota; Senator Javits, Republican of New York, and Senator Case, Republican of New Jersey. The late Senator Richard Neuberger, Democrat of Oregon, was a member. His place has not been filled.

Opposition Hit

Referring to the Fine Arts Commission's adverse report, former Attorney General Biddle said in his report submitted to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House:

"Immediately after this decision was rendered I stated that I was sorry that the Commission of Fine Arts had seen fit to advise against the construction of the memorial; that from the beginning the Memorial Commission had sought and acted on the best professional advice that could be obtained; that the site had been selected by a committee of outstanding architects; and that the competition was held in close co-operation with the American Institute of Architects and the several Government agencies that were involved."

The design was chosen a year and a half ago from among 574 entries after five years of preparation for a national competition. Pedersen &

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